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ABSTRACT

Based on the view that communities that have good schools and better educated residents are safer, more stable communities where business and families thrive, this pamphlet describes how community-based organizations can support family-school compacts and affirm the importance of family and community involvement in student learning. The pamphlet details the components of a community-based organization promise to involve the organization in a family-school-community partnership. The pamphlet also includes a form for joining the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education and delineates materials available from the U.S. Department of Education providing guidelines on getting families involved in education. Finally, the pamphlet describes ways a community can support schools and family involvement in education through: (1) combating alcohol, drugs, and violence; (2) providing mentoring programs; (3) enlisting community volunteers; (4) offering before- and after-school, weekend, and summer learning programs; (5) supporting early childhood development and preschool programs; and (6) teaching parenting skills. (KB)

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COMMUNITIES THAT SUPPORT SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES ARE BETTER PLACES TO LIVE, WORK, AND LEARN!

Communities that have good schools and better educated residents are safer, more stable communities where businesses and families thrive. These communities can be magnets for new businesses and jobs. Education is the key to a strong local economy, a good quality of life, and a brighter future for everyone!

"Better education is everybody's business!"

— Richard W. Riley
U.S. Secretary of Education

Community Organizations:

JOIN TOGETHER FOR KIDS!

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Partnership for Family Involvement in Education

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JOIN THE PARTNERSHIP FOR FAMILY INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION

THE COMMUNITY PROMISE

A strong and vigorous community, one that is supportive of all citizens, depends upon an educated, skilled, competent and involved citizenry. Schools, families, and community organizations increasingly are accepting mutual responsibility for children's learning. By working together, exchanging information, sharing decision making, and collaborating for children's learning, everyone can contribute to the educational process. As a community-based organization, we support family-school compacts and affirm the importance of family and community involvement in student learning.

We commit to involve our organization and its community members in a family-school-community partnership. By coming together with other organizations, we will:

- Make safe schools/safe neighborhoods a priority.
- Combat alcohol, drugs, and violence in and around schools and neighborhoods.
- Reinforce parenting skills by using community institutions to provide family and literacy training and referral services.
- Provide mentoring and homework help programs so that children may be assured of tutoring and guidance from knowledgeable and responsible adults.
- Come together to coordinate delivery of services and to eliminate duplication of efforts.
- Help to develop and sponsor affordable and quality after-school, weekend and summer learning, cultural, and community recreational activities.
- Support school improvement efforts in the local community.
- Support and become informed about school governance issues.
- Encourage schools to be involved in the life of the community through cosponsorship of community outreach activities of partner organizations.

We would like to become a member of the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education. We commit our community organization to family-friendly practices and will work with others to form partnerships that support children's learning. (Please type or print the following information.)

WHAT YOUR COMMUNITY CAN DO TO SUPPORT SCHOOLS AND FAMILY INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION

Combat alcohol, drugs, and violence. Prevention programs work best when parents, students, law enforcement officials, and communities join together to fight back. Schools and community members can provide mentoring and after-school programs to give children safe havens from violence and alternatives to drugs.

Provide mentoring programs. Interested citizens—from employers to college students to members of faith communities to senior citizens—can participate in mentoring programs that provide emotional support and guidance to young people. Mentors can help with schoolwork, job skill development and career planning, and can help connect young people to the potential and importance of college and training beyond high school.

Enlist community volunteers. Community and religious organizations can organize support for young people. Senior citizens in many communities are putting their experience and expertise to work on behalf of children. Volunteers can serve as tutors or teacher aides, work in the library, or help with after-school activities.

Offer before- and after-school, weekend and summer learning programs. Community partnerships can make after-school and summer learning activities available to young people through schools, cultural institutions, park districts, and other public and private agencies. These programs are particularly important for children and adolescents to provide safe and enriching environments in a structured, supervised setting.

Support early childhood development and preschool programs. New scientific findings on brain development in very young children point to the importance of children's earliest experiences in helping them get off to a strong and healthy start. Community and religious organizations can help children start on the right path by supporting programs that work with young children and their parents.

Teach parenting skills. Programs for parents can include academic and GED classes, literacy training, career preparation, early childhood education, children's health, and assistance in finding helpful services in the community. High-quality parenting programs engage parents early, sometimes even before their child's birth.

PLEASE JOIN US

Your community organization is invited to join the **Partnership for Family Involvement in Education**, a growing national coalition of thousands of families, schools, communities, religious organizations and employers who recognize their interdependent roles in supporting family and community involvement in children's learning and improving our schools. You can sign and return the **Community Promise** on the inside of this brochure. For more complete information,

Call the U. S. Department of Education
at 1-800-USA-LEARN
or
Write to the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education
600 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202-9133
http://www.ed.gov/PFIE

PARTNERSHIP for Family Involvement in Education

Community Group: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Official: _____ Signature: _____

Contact Person: _____ Title: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-Mail: _____

Send to: Partnership for Family Involvement in Education, 600 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-8173 or fax to 202-205-9133 to receive your **Community Promise Certificate.** If you are a representative of a religious organization and would like to join the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education, please contact the U.S. Department of Education and ask for the **Statement of Common Purpose Among Religious Communities Supporting Family Involvement in Learning**.

GREAT WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

- *America Goes Back to School* encourages everyone to go back to a school each fall to share their talents and experiences. A free kit is available to help you organize an event and start a long-term partnership between your local school and community organizations and businesses.

- *Think College Early* encourages students to take the tougher courses they need to be prepared to go to college, starting in middle school, and to inform parents of the necessary sequence of courses their child needs to take, such as algebra in the eighth grade and chemistry by eleventh or twelfth grade, as well as the financial planning needed to help pay for college.

- *America Reads Challenge: Read*Write*Now!* encourages children to read and write 30 minutes a day and to work with a learning partner. Age-appropriate activities and materials are available to help children work on their reading skills with parents, teenagers, and other caring adults.

- *Priority on After-School Extended Learning.* Partner members have placed new emphasis on the importance of providing before- and after-school activities that extend learning for children in a safe, drug-free environment.

To receive free information about any of these initiatives or to ask for materials, call the U.S. Department of Education at 1-800-USA-LEARN.